Scene 1

A semi-circle of chairs, GRANT in the middle, facing the audience, with the rest branching out.

GRANT: “Welcome to the LGBTQ+ support group. Let’s first go around an say our names, pronouns, and how long we’ve been out of the closet. My name is Grant, he/him, I’ve been openly bi for 8 years.”

KAIT: “My name is Kaitlin, or Kait. I prefer them/them, but she/her is alright. And… I came out about two years ago.”

ROSS: “My name is Ross and I’m a he/him, and I’ve been out of the closet for 5 years.”

ALLY: “Hi, I’m Ally, they/them, and I’ve been publicly non-binary for a little over a year.”

VIC: “My name is Victoria, but just call me Vic. I’m a they/them. I’ve only been out of the closet for 8 months.”

JACOB: “Jacob, I’m a he/him.”

ROSE: “Hi, I’m Rose. Don’t be fooled by the spelling, it’s rose-ay. My pronouns are she/her but they/them is fine. I’ve been open for some 4 years now, and I’ve never felt so free.”

SAM: “Hi, I’m Sam, and I prefer either a he/him or a they/them. And I’m not entirely sure on my closeted-ness.”

GRANT: “Perfect! I know this sounds sycophantic, but you’re all doing great so far. Alright, now, I’m going to tell you a story about no one in particular, and you can close your eyes, relax, or not, whatever you want to do. You can cheer or woo or anything. Okay?”

Everybody makes some kind of acknowledging sound or motion. One person lays down, some lean forward, whatevs. During the telling of the story, actors dressed in black, to the side of the set, enact the story, silently.

“Alright. I’m going to tell you about a boy named… Paul. So, Paul was 16 years old, and he walks into his chem class, and he’s had this crush on another boy in this class since the start of the year, and he thought not much of it since his family is really quite liberal and he’s had crushes of this kind before.”

ROSE: “Woo! Go Paul!”

GRANT: “Yeaaah! Well, this crush is a little different. Because, this boy, Paul has actually talked to before, and from what he knows, this boy is almost certainly gay. So, after some time, Paul walks up to the boy, in chemistry, and asks him out on a coffee date. To Paul’s surprise, and a bit of the other boy’s he says ‘Yes.’”

Mostly everybody, including GRANT, except maybe one or two people, cheer.

GRANT: “So they go out for coffee, and they really enjoy each other’s company, and they decide to plan and actual, dinner date. And it goes really well. They plan more dates, go on more dates. And they’re openly together at school too. They turn the heads of some of the more conservative kids, but they don’t get bullied. Paul’s boyfriend has come out to his parent’s, meanwhile, and Paul has met his parents. Empowered, Paul decides to come out to his parents. He goes home that day, and…”

At this point, focus shifts to the actors in black, now fully taking on the personas of the characters.

PAUL (AIB) *Actor in black*: “Mom, Dad, I have something to say”

PAUL’S MOTHER (AIB): “Sure, sweetie”

PAUL’S FATHER(AIB): “Of course, whatever you have to say.”

Pause

PAUL: “Mom, Dad, I’m gay.”

GRANT: *Voice over from on stage, in darkness. Alternatively: Standing at the edge corner of the stage speaking now directly to the audience.* “Once again, Paul’s family was very liberal, and very supportive of Paul in the past, so Paul expected overwhelming support. Instead…”

MOTHER: “Are you sure?”

PAUL: “Yes, very much so, I’m actually dating a guy.”

Long, tense, but not awkward, silence

FATHER: *Calmly, but directive* “Get out of my house.”

PAUL: “What?”

FATHER: “I SAID GET OUT OF MY HOUSE! GRAB YOUR THINGS, AND GET OUT!”

GRANT: “Paul grabs his stuff, and leaves, shaken and disheartened. He drives to San Francisco and gets a hotel room for a few nights. After, he drives back, to his best friend’s house, where he stays until college. He doesn’t text or call his boyfriend. When his boyfriend tries to call, he just lets it go to voicemail. When he gets back to school, he avoids his boyfriend, and transfers to another chemistry period. He starts hitting on this girl that he had a small crush on before he started dating his, now ex-, boyfriend. Eventually to the point, where they go back to her house, and you know what happens next. He hopes he can suppress himself so that his parents will accept him again. He’s with this girl until college, where he goes off to a college on the other side of the country, and never goes back to Reno. He gets married and has kids, living with that guilt for the rest of his life, even after his parent’s death.”

Blackout

Scene 2:

The stage resumes to what it was at the beginning of the show.

Long, long silence

GRANT: *Slowly and calmly* “That might have been difficult for us to listen to, but let’s try to assess our emotions. We’re going to go around, starting with Sam this time, and say whatever we feel about the story. Sam?”

Short pause

SAM: *Discombobulated* “Oh…… geez……. I was pretty happy at first but I felt like my heart didn’t sink into my stomach, but all the way to my toes. I….. oh……. Uh….. I guess that’s all I can say.”

ROSE: “Isn’t this supposed to be a support group? Why did you tell that horrifying, deprecating, exceptionally depressing story? What in the hell are you trying to do to us?”

GRANT: *Shrugs with his lips* “We’ll get to it.” *Smiles*

JACOB: “I’m… Still… Trying… To… Analyze the… Story”

VIC: “Ohhhhhh… I’m crying. I can’t breathe. I’m with Rose, what is wrong with you?”

GRANT shrugs with his lips and nods

ALLY: “I’m just dumbfounded. Ugh… It’s just, so, so sad. You said it’s about nobody in particular?”

GRANT: “Yes”

ALLY: “I can’t believe that, it’s just too depressing.”

ROSS: “I’m going to be sick.”

KAIT: “I’m with you.” *Patting ROSS on the back*

GRANT: “There’s a water fountain, hot and cold, over there, if anybody needs it. And we’re going to take a five minute break and then we’ll come back.”

Everybody gets up, some stretch, walk for a moment or two

Blackout, but no actual intermission

Scene 3:

Everybody in different seats, except GRANT, who stays middle-most.

GRANT: “So, I think you’re all wondering why I told you that story. I presented you with a very depressing story to open your emotional pours. I could give you all the science, but I don’t think you want that. But now, while that story is still fresh in our minds, I’d like for us all to tell our backstories. I’ll start, and then we’ll go to Vic.”

“My story is a little boring. I had my first boy-crush when I was 14, and I wasn’t sure how to handle it, but it just seemed to pass on by. About a year later I had another crush, but this time one of my friends was openly gay, and he told me that it was, in fact, a crush, and he told me to flirt with him a little to see how I feel. Sometime later, I learn another boy had a crush on me, and I learned this when he came up to me, out of the blue, and asked me out to dinner. At this point I still wasn’t entirely sure, and I had a girlfriend at the time, who I later lost my virginity to. So, I politely turned him down. I eventually broke up with this girl, and then acquired another crush. At this point, I was horny as hell, so I asked him out and he accepted, and we went to dinner, and had a great time. The next day I worked up the courage to come out to my parents and my liberal parents said, ‘We hoped so,’ but they accepted me.”

Short pause

“Let’s move on to Vic. Vic, you ready?”

At this point, the actors in black come back out on stage to reenact each of the character's backstories, once again, silently.

VIC: "Yeah, sure Umm… I'm not sure if I was closeted or not because I am a heterosexual woman, biologically, but I never felt super woman-like. I tackled with that for a while, wondering if I would be better off as a man or whatnot. I tried some, some things in college but it wasn't my cup of tea. I tackled with this feeling for a bit longer before ultimately deciding, 'You, know what, I don't have to be specifically 'her', but something else.' So, I decided, around eight months ago that I would start asking people to call me 'they/them'. When I asked my parents, they acted a little awkward, but they settled and now I no longer feel tied to my femininity. … Although, there are times where I do feel my femininity much more and being called 'they' is almost insulting. I can't seem to figure out what I want to be. One day I'm one thing, the next day I'm another. I feel as though I don't really have an identity."

GRANT: "You don't have to feel tied to anything at all, that's the whole reason we're here. We're not tied to the stereotypes of typical men and women. We can be whatever we want to be."

VIC: *Softly* "Thanks."

GRANT: "Alright then. Let's go Rose, and then Ally, and then Jacob. Alright?"

ROSE: "Oh to hell with you! Makin' us express our emotions!"

GRANT: "Do you not want to go? It's fine if you don't. Ally?"

ROSE: "Oh hell no! I'm still gonna tell my story."

Scene 4:

ROSE: "Alright. When I was a little boy I loved playing dress-up, it was just my favorite thing in the world. My parents loved to put me and my brother in twin costumes for Halloween. So one year we did Sonny and Cher, one year we went as Marty McFly and Jennifer, one year we went as Boston Rob and Amber."

Most people look confused in one of two ways: "That's an interesting choice" and "Who is that?"

"Bet you can guess who I was! Anyway, I loved dress up and I kept doing it until I was maybe 10 or 11, at which point I started making my own clothes!

I loved making gloves more than anything else for some reason, and not like winter gloves, no, the thin silk ones that went up to your elbow. Things were pretty peachy-keen for the most part, until I entered middle school."

Pause

ROSE: "I walked in with my silk gloves and my colorful tennis shoes and my ripped jeans and my hot-pink t-shirt and before I even get to homeroom…. this big, muscular boy comes up to me and says,"

BULLY (AIB): "Dress like a woman tomorrow and you're going to get an whooping."

ROSE: "I didn't really know what he was talking about, so I went to school the next day dressed very similarly. This kid was waiting outside the school, leaning on the wall, arms crossed. I walked up, not knowing anything, but still intimidated, so I tried to pretend like I didn't see him. He definitely saw me. He stomps over to me, picks me up by my collar, and says,

BULLY: "What did I tell you yesterday?"

ROSE (Primary): "I was scared so I was silent. He threw a fist to my stomach, then to my head, which knocked me out. He must have kept hitting me after I was out because I woke up in the hospital three days later. I was found by a teacher some minutes after this kid left, so I have no clue who almost killed me. I was homeschooled from there on out. When I went off to college, I decided to fully embrace myself in pure spite of that kid, and I announced to my family that I would be undergoing a gender change and to, instead of calling me Robbie, call me Rose."

ROSE (AIB): *Simultaneously with ROSE (Primary)* "…call me Rose."

Blackout

Scene 5:

GRANT: "That's some deep stuff. If you don't mind me asking, how did you have the confidence to be yourself after that traumatizing experience?"

ROSE: "Spite, I think. I was sooooo pissed at that S.O.B. everything I do is to make him want to kill me again."

GRANT: *Visibly wowed* "Ally, care to share?"

At a point during the following monologue, Jacob pantomimes asking GRANT if he can use the restroom, and exits stage.

ALLY: “Sure, why not? Let’s see… I never felt male or female. I felt too feminine to be a man, and too masculine to be a woman. I come from a tiny little town in Texas, very conservative, so I kind of suppressed those feelings. I finished high school and went to college in Los Angeles. I had to get some bloodwork done because I was going to medical school and I thought nothing of it. Come to find a letter in the mail months later from the bloodwork place and they want me to see a geneticist because of some [*air quotes*] ‘anomalies in my bloodwork’. So, I looked for a geneticist in SoCal and he took some more blood samples, and then called me about two months later. He asked me to schedule a date to come down to his office for a consultation. I walked in and talked to him and he told me,”

DOCTOR (AIB): “Ally, sit down. I want you to be prepared for this news. It appears you have Klinefelter Syndrome. It’s also known as 47,XXY, meaning that instead of having one X and Y chromosome, like most men, you have two X chromosomes and one Y chromosomes.”

ALLY: “He told me all about it, asked about a bunch of its symptoms, and then sent me on my merry way. Even though it didn’t impact me all that much, it explained why I was so different, inside and out. Many of my traits were apparently caused by my [*air quotes*] ‘KS’, my ADHD, my autism, my learning delay, and even just my introverted-ness. I felt debilitated. I decided not to tell anybody about it. That is, until I was watching the pride rallies on the news. Thousands of people not giving a” *Another actor coughs loudly to keep the play PG* “about what anybody else thinks. They stood up for who they are. Like a bullet in the back, it hit me. I should be ashamed of my KS, I shouldn’t be ashamed of myself, because all these people probably felt just like me at some point. I took a couple days to deliberate, but I decided that the real Ally, isn’t a he. Ally isn’t a she, either. Ally is Ally. So, I started asking people to refer to me with they and them. My family still says ‘he’, but they still support me, because they’ll correct other people. It’s a little difficult correcting other people, but my friends have my back, [*ritardando*] and I couldn’t ever repay them for how much they’ve done for me.”

Blackout

Scene 6:

Everybody has a cheeky, sweet little grin on their faces.

KAIT: “Nice job, pal.”

ALLY: “Thanks grandpa”

KAIT squints, still smiling, at ALLY.

GRANT: “That was really nice. Jacob went to the restroom, so they’re not going to share yet. But, Sam, are you ready?”

SAM: “With my backstory?”

GRANT: “Yeah.”

SAM: “Okay. Ummm… Uh… Where do I want to start?
Uh……”

ROSS: “Sam, where are you from?”

SAM: “I’m from Cambridge, Massachusetts. Why do you ask?”

ROSS: “Home of Harvard, right? Pretty liberal?”

SAM: “Yeah. I mean, there were some right-wingers, of course, but generally very democratic.”

ROSS: “Did you feel very judged in Cambridge?”

SAM: “In the town that hosts some of the greatest minds alive, yeah. But not really sexually.”

ROSS: “Why did you come here? Today?”

SAM: “I guess I’m a little sexually confused.”

ROSS: “If you don’t mind me asking: in what way?”

SAM: “I don’t really feel manly enough to be a man. I don’t feel like a woman, but I don’t feel like a they, either. I don’t feel like I’m… even human, sometimes. I just feel like a permanent outsider of any group, even this one.”

SAM looks dejected. Pause, as some people look like they want to say something, but just wait for somebody else to say something.

ROSS: “Musical theater fan?”

SAM: “Yeah, I try to see as many as I can live, and I’ve watched Singin’ in the Rain [*chuckles*], like, 20 times.”

Pause

ROSS: *In a semi-sing-song manner* “The choices are many, so risk it, love. And have it your own way.” *A little more sing-song* “’Cause whatever butters you’re biscuit, love…” *Pause* “Is fine by me…” *Pause* “Which is why I sayyyyy…”

ROSS half points to SAM for him to keep singing. Pause. SAM clearly considering how to respond. The rest of the group clearly waiting to see how SAM responds.

SAM: *Singing, slowly* “Some like a cool pastoral scene | With rolling hills, and woods of green.” *A little faster* “Some like the warm Hawaiian clime | Where one can really take ones time”

ROSS: *Almost at full speed* “Some like it nippy on the ice | ‘Cause then the sheets are paradise”

SAM: *Not yet at full speed, but teasing the audience* “Some like it rough, some like it tame”

ROSS: *Not yet…* “Give me a moth, who loves the flame”

SAM & ROSS: *Here we go! Fully singing* “Some like it hot, and hot is what I got for you!”

Everybody, including ROSS but excudling SAM claps, but not for too long. ROSS fully smiling and SAM smiling with one corner of his mouth.

ROSS: “This group isn’t to fix you, or to even help you feel better about yourself (of course we try to do that as well). This is to find a place of community, in any way shape or form. To make us feel less like outsiders. Hell, a… heterosexual, muscular, extremely masculine man could come in here and, as long as he doesn’t make anybody feel bad, we’ll accept him, for everything that he is.”

SAM hugs ROSS tightly

SAM: “Thank you. Very, very much.”

ROSS pats SAM on the back. A short pause.

GRANT: “Wow, Ross. You should just take my position. Genuinely. That was really, really good. Well, um, do you want to share your story?”

JACOB right around here, or during the scene transition, re-enters.

ROSS: “Sorry, but, A) I think would take away the current vibe in the room, and B) that actually tired me out a little, which probably isn’t good. But my

story is actually quite similar to yours' [*looking at GRANT*], but it just took me a little longer, by, like, four years."

Blackout

Scene 7:

The AIBs in this scene can be in costume, no, ***should*** *be in costume*

GRANT: "Last again. Kait. Wanna go?"

KAIT (Primary): "I don't think I can top Sam and Ross, but I'll totally go. I was seventeen when I got my first *real* girlfriend. I came out when I was 13, and had some 'kind of' girlfriends, but not very invested until Jess. I saw her across the room in Anatomy, and the very first day I just got up walked over, and said,"

KAIT (AIB): "Hey, I, uh, saw you across the room, and, uh, I could, um, just tell somehow that, um, I don't know, but um… [*stops, takes a deep breath*] I really like you and I don't think it's just because you're hot or because I'm really horny right now. Call it 'love at first sight' or something else, but I really, really like you, somehow, and I would like to ask you out to dinner some time."

KAIT (Primary): *Voice Over* "I was really tense, almost hoping she'd just say no and get it over with. But instead, she said,"

JESS (AIB): *Grinning* "First day you meet me you tell me you're really horny?"

KAIT (AIB): *Very embarrassed* "I'm sorry. I don't know what I'm doing, I won't bother you again."

KAIT (AIB) begins to walk away, JESS stops her, grinning, and a little in love as well

JESS: "No [*chuckles a bit*]. It takes a lot of guts to say something like that. I'd love to go out to dinner with you, really."

KAIT (AIB): *Quite confused* "Really, you sure?"

JESS: "Really."

KAIT (Primary): "We went to dinner, had a wonderful time, and kept ogling at each other in class. One day, I heard a song on the radio, and it just made me think in a completely different way. So I called up Jess and said,"

If possible, try to have the AIBs on opposite sides of the stage for this part

KAIT (AIB): “Do you have a radio nearby?”

JESS: “Yeah, why?”

KAIT (AIB): “Tune it over to 89.5”

JESS: “The classical station?”

KAIT (AIB): “Yes, just turn it on and listen.”

“La Vie en Rose” begins playing, but not at the start. Maybe like 15 seconds before the vocals start.

JESS: “Okay, I’m listening”

Lights go dark on KAIT (AIB)

JESS: “I think I’ve heard this song before, it sounds familiar.”

KAIT (AIB) walks over the JESS’s side of the stage in darkness, and stays just out of spotlight, or behind a door, still out of spot. A knock is heard. JESS grunts, puts down the phone, and walks to the door. JESS opens the door, La Vie en Rose still playing, to see KAIT on the other side, down on one knee. JESS is extremely surprised, I hope that’s obvious to you.

JESS: “Wha-”

KAIT (AIB): “Jess, I’ve only known you for a little more than a year, but we’ve already exchanged ‘I love you’s, and made each other our emergency contacts. You are the love of my life and I would be terrified to be with anybody else. I know we’re young and dumb and this is probably a bad idea, but I’m going to ask the question anyway. Jess Harper Marie, will you marry me?”

JESS is overwhelmed with joy and is completely speechless.

JESS: *Crying tears of joy* “Yes!”

JESS and KAIT stage kiss. Or real kiss. Or don’t kiss. I don’t care. Lights shift back so we can see KAIT (Primary)

KAIT (Primary): “Best day of my life. I, in that instant, gave up in trying to fit into stereotypes or trying to make sexists like me. I no longer give a crap about what they think. I’m me, and no one can take that away. To be honest, I keep coming back here just to remind me of what I’m hoping and working for. To allow people to be their true selves, without judgement.”

Blackout

Scene 8:

GRANT: “These have all just been wonderful. Absolutely wonderful. But if you don’t mind can I ask you a few questions about your stories?”

Everybody acknowledges in some way.

GRANT: “Perfect. Okay um… Jacob, when did you come out?”

JACOB: “What?”

GRANT: “I think you forgot to say when you came out at the beginning of this session. So I just want to know.”

JACOB: “I don’t really want to answer that question.”

GRANT: “I’m going to go against **all** my morals and ask again. When did you come out?”

VIC: “Grant, I think this is a little rude. If he doesn’t want to say, he doesn’t have to.”

GRANT: *Gets out of his chair and approaches JACOB* “Please, I’ve got this. Jacob, when did you come out?”

JACOB: *angered* “Please, I don’t want to answer!”

Quickfire, like Rocky Horror. ROSE sits back and is enjoying this.

ROSS: “Grant!”

GRANT: “Ross!”

VIC: “Grant!”

KAIT: “Vic!”

GRANT: “Kait!”

GRANT leans in to JACOB, their noses separated by only a few molecules

GRANT: “Tell. Me. When. When did Jacob come out? Or has he? Have you Jacob? Have you?”

JACOB: *VERY ANGERED* “No! I haven’t! Do you want to hear my story? Do you? Do you! My parents were supportive of me my whole life. I come out to them, I tell them I’m gay, and they still seem quite supportive. But after a couple months I notice we’ve been going to church more often. Don’t think

too much of it. I get a letter in the mail that my therapist moved out of state. So my parents find another, she's fine. But then, I notice that when I want to out with my guy friends, they come up with a reason that I can't go. But, and here's the kicker, they are super supportive of me going out with my girl friends. At this point I take a minute to think critically, and I figure out and I figure out, oh [*angered chuckle*], my parents are trying to fix me! Their trying to 'remove my gay' without me knowing. You know what I do? I confront them. I tell them to shut up and leave. Where am I going? I don't know! Anywhere but home. So, I drive away. I drive all the way to Portland, where I have a friends who I called, told them the entire situation, and their willing to let me stay there until I turn 18. So, I stay. Then I turn 18, and for my birthday, I go home to get my stuff and beat some people up. I only got to do one of those that day. Turns out, news of my trip came back from Portland, so my parents fled. So I didn't get my stuff, I left it right there, and decided to start living in the house my parents fled because they had a friend who would tell them when I left Reno again. And if I never left Reno, they would never come back. Mortgage was paid off, and I had a job waiting for me that could easily cover electric and water and internet and food after taxes. Letter comes after I've been living in the house for three months, and it's the deed, already signed by my father to give the house to me. I sign, and send it back with a note that says: 'There is nothing you mother------- could give me to make up for what you did.' [*prepare an actual beep sound*] But you know what? Their actions traumatized me so badly, that whenever I think about asking a guy out, I am overtaken by fear. Complete, unruly fear. Is that the backstory you wanted? Is it? [*looking at GRANT*] Is that what you wanted you little [*restrains themself*]?"

GRANT puts his hand over his chin and mouth, holding up his head.

GRANT: *Very calmly and confidently* "Yes. That's exactly what I wanted. How many people have you told that story to?"

JACOB: *Slowly calming down* "None."

GRANT: "Seven. You just told seven people that story."

Everybody looks disappointed in themselves as they realize what GRANT was trying to do. Pause

GRANT: "Why are you here?"

JACOB: *Slowly calming down still* "I finally wanted to try to lose the fear."

GRANT nods his head with the long, tense silence

GRANT: “Did you hear Sam and Ross’s performance?”

JACOB: “No.”

GRANT: “Ross?”

ROSS: “This group isn’t to fix you, or to even help you feel better about yourself (of course we try to do that as well). This is to find a place of community, in any way shape or form. To make us feel less like outsiders. We’ll accept anyone and everyone for anything and everything that tey are, just as they are.”

Silence

GRANT: “Let’s get comfortable. Like I said earlier, you can close your eyes, relax, or not, whatever you want to do. I just want you to listen, maybe visualize.”

Pause

“Imagine a world without LGBTQ protests. Not because we don’t exist, but because they’re not needed.”

Pause

“Imagine a world where you can’t be arrested for the color of your skin, and citizens aren’t deported.”

Pause

“Imagine a world where women aren’t pushed around by their husbands, and where men are able to express their emotions freely.”

Pause

“Imagine no corrupt politicians”

Pause

“Imagine no greed”

Pause

“Imagine no war”

Pause

“Imagine no poverty”

Pause

“Imagine no starvation”

Pause

“Imagine all the people living life in peace”

Pause

SAM: “You-hoo-oo-oo-oo”

Everybody smiles lightly

VIC: “You may say that we’re dreamers”

The piano comes in

ROSS: “But we’re not the only ones”

KAIT: “We hope someday you’ll join us”

JACOB: *hesitantly* “And the world will be as one.”

SAM: “You may say that we’re dreamers”

ROSE: “But we’re not the only ones”

ALLY: “We hope someday you’ll join us”

Big finish

GRANT: “And the world will be as one!”

Blackout